Status: Definitely Not a Dad

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by ShadeCrawler

Summary

As the weekend starts, Shouta mentally struggles with the fact that Hizashi thinks that he may have adopted some kids without meaning to.

He didn't. He absolutely didn't. Aizawa Shouta was many things but he was definitely not a dad.

Notes

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Shouta stood by the gate of Yuuei, staring down at his five students seriously. He ignored the eager grins on Uraraka and Midoriya's faces, the cute way that Iida and Todoroki were both holding Midoriya's hands to keep him grounded, and how Shinsou was practically vibrating right out of his street clothes in his excitement to leave school grounds with friends. He ignored the warmth that had settled in his stomach and said firmly, "You'll be back on school grounds by nine o'clock tonight. Nine o'clock, hell spawn. I don't care if you're attacked by half the villains in Japan when you're out. Hell, I don't care if every single villain in Asia decides to make you their targets. If I have to come to find you after curfew, those villains will be the least of your problems." He made sure to glare into each of his beaming students' faces to make sure the gravity of his threat shone through. Their smiles didn't diminish in the slightest. If anything, they only widened. Hell spawn, he thought fondly. "Understand me?"

"Sensei, I will ensure that the five of us return back to the dorms before its time for all first years to be on school grounds," Iida promised, his free hand chopping through the air as he did so. "We'll be getting dinner in a restaurant that is close to the theatre in a timely matter to ensure that we aren't late to our viewing. And our movie ends at seven thirty which means that we'll more than enough time to return back to the dorms before curfew!" Even with the determination flowing through Iida's voice to follow the rules, Shouta knew that the boy was just as excited as his friends to actually leave Yuuei for a few hours and enjoy a movie night with his friends. To have the chance to just be kids for a few hours instead of heroes in training with the weight of the world on their shoulders and, despite Shouta's mostly teasing warning, the eyes of half of Japan's villains on them.

Now, if Shouta would just stop hovering and let his students leave.

It was four-thirty on Friday, the rest of the week having passed without major incident. Shouta had been wary, especially with how the start of the week had gone. New Quirks, spilt coffee, and headaches all around. After Wednesday, he was starting to think that the entire week would be shit. That Thursday and Friday would bring their own brands of terror. Maybe the week would end with a major attack on Yuuei. Or Problem Child manifesting a new Quirk that made him fade away into nothing but fucking smoke. Either, or both, would fit the theme that the week had followed. But no. Thursday had passed without incident. Midoriya attended his Quirk lessons with

Hizashi and then bounced his way back to the dorms with a grin on his face. And the only noticeable thing that had happened today before Shouta had gone to see this group of his demons off to the movies was Kaminari and Mina attempting to see if her acid was able to conduct electricity. A normal, dull, everyday class 1-A activity. There was a sense of normality in the air.

Shouta didn't trust it. Not in the fucking least.

So, no, he didn't feel that he was being paranoid when he asked, "You all have the trackers on you in case something happens?"

The trackers were a new safety measure that Yuuei had put into place after Bakugou's kidnapping. Trackers that were carefully placed into watches that every single student had to wear whenever they left the school grounds, whether that be on trips back to see family or just on a simple outing. The watches were a collaboration project by Power Loader and the Third Year Support classes. They had been massed produced as quickly as possible so that by the time the students had moved into the dorms, the homeroom teachers were able to introduce the new precaution.

Some of the other Homeroom teachers were lax with how they enforced this new rule. The General Education teachers who mostly had kids that weren't necessarily the targets of Japan's up-and-coming villains. Shouta's kids were. Shouta was not lax with this new rule.

All five of his kids raised their hands, the watches shining in the light of the afternoon sun. Shouta's gaze scanned each of the wrists to make sure that there was a watch on them and had to fight to keep his lips into a thin line when he realized that Uraraka, Iida, and Midoriya had all taken the option of having the outside of their watches customized and had gotten the same matching design. A bright sparkling blue with little pink lines running through it. It was not cute. It was *not*. "We're shackled, Sensei," Shinsou drawled, tapping his finger against his own purple watch pointedly. The finger strayed to a button placed on the side that would alert Shouta and every hero in a five-mile radius of their location and of the fact that they were in immediate danger. "And we know what to do if something happens."

Shouta nodded sharply. "Good. Remember that none of you have your Provisional Licenses yet. Fighting villains right now is *illegal* for you without express permission. If something happens that you have blanket permission from me to use your Quirks," Todoroki, Midoriya, and Iida all relaxed a little at that, "to *get yourselves to*

safety. Nothing else. Understood?"

"Yes, Aizawa-sensei!"

"Can we go now," Uraraka blurted out, bouncing on the balls of her feet. She looked about ready to sprint right Shouta and through the gates to freedom.

Shouta sighed, feeling like he was going to regret letting his students leave the school grounds today. He felt that way every time any of them left Yuuei and his immediate protection. He looked over his shoulder and his gaze strayed to where Togata and Amajiki were standing by the gates, pressed close together and speaking in low tones. He had managed to talk to them and gotten them to agree to change their movie date so that they could accompany Problem Child and his little band of terrors to the movies. It made something in him ease a little.

("It's just a friendly movie between friends, Sensei," Togata had cried, waving his hands in Shouta's very unimpressed face. Amajiki had already turned around and pressed his face as far as it would go into the nearest wall. "That's all! It's not a date!"

"Togata, I couldn't care less about whether or not it's a date or how deep in denial you and Amajiki are-"

"Aizawa-Sensei!"

"-You have your Provisional Licenses. Keep my students safe or I'll demonstrate just how fast I can put expulsion forms through." It was an empty threat. Mostly)

"Stay close to the Third Years on the way there. They agreed to walk to the movies with you. They'll be watching a different movie but in the same theatre. They'll also be leaving the theatre at the same time as you. They *do* have their Provisional Licenses. If something happens, leave them to handle it."

His kids nodded again, vibrating with restless energy. "Under-"

"May we leave now," Todoroki asked blankly, talking over Iida as easily as breathing.

Shouta pinched the bridge of his nose. The question of how he hadn't expelled his entire class yet was something he asked himself daily. "*Yes,* you may leave now." He raised his voice so they could

hear him as they scrambled past him to where the two Third years were waiting. “I know the heroes patrolling in that area so if you break something-“

“You’ll know about it,” Shinsou and Midoriya, his own personal little tormentors, cried in unison as they ran with their friends to freedom.

Hell spawn.

Shouta turned around and watched the five kids crowd around Togata and Amajiki, Togata introducing the two of them through bouts of laughter and Amajiki pressing himself behind Togata shyly. He didn’t say anything else or turn around when he heard footsteps coming up from behind him. He didn’t even say anything when an arm slung around his shoulders and his husband leant against him affectionately. He just watched as Togata took Amajiki’s hand and led the five First years down the street. He could see the ignorance on Togata’s face. He thought this would be easy.

That poor, oblivious kid.

“Your kids are going to shatter those two,” Hizashi sighed, shaking his head fondly. “Two shining heroes in training that are supposed to graduate this year. And your punk ass kids are going to destroy them.”

“If they can’t handle them at their best then they’ll never handle being heroes,” Shouta grunted, leaning to the side a little so he could watch his students disappearing down the street. Todoroki, Midoriya, and Iida were swinging their hands through the air while Uraraka had seemingly bullied Shinsou into linking arms with her. Even from so far away, Shouta could see Shinsou’s bright red face and pleased smile. “Are you ready to get going or not, ‘Zashi?”

Hizashi grinned and dramatically offered Shouta his arm with a bright grin. He was out of his hero uniform and dressed in a nice pair of slacks, a white t-shirt shirt with a jean jacket, and his hair was half tied back. “Yes, sir!”

Shouta huffed and rolled his eyes at his husband’s dramatics, shoving the arm gently away from him. But, immediately, he took Hizashi’s hand, leading him out of the gates himself and down the street in the opposite direction of his students. He was also dressed in civilian clothes with his hair tied back in a simple bun. It was date night, after all. He could afford to look at least a little nice for his

husband. “I swear,” he grumbled under his breath as they started to walk down the street, “if dinner gets cut short because either of our groups of demons gets the inclination to burn down the dorms.” He trailed off meaningfully, ignoring his husband snickering into his free hand.

He glanced behind him to watch his students disappear in the opposite direction. Midoriya was staring up at Amajiki with that sunshine smile of his, eyes full of awe as his mouth moved a mile a second. Probably gushing about Amajiki’s Quirk. The poor boy in question looked ready to somehow steal Togata’s Quirk and sink right through the floor and never come out. Uraraka had released poor Shinsou and had switched positions with Midoriya, holding onto Todoroki and Iida’s hands happily while Shinsou was now being clung to by Midoriya.

Five students out of the dorms and released upon Musutafu. Fifteen left inside of Yuuei and with both the tools and brains to burn it to the ground.

Shouta wasn’t even going to be able to finish ordering his goddamn drink, he just knew it.

“Relax, Shouchan,” Hizashi chuckled, squeezing his hand gently. “’muri said that she’ll be watching the 1-A dorms until we get back and my Gen Ed kiddos love it when Thirteen come hang out with them. Bakugou has barely looked up from that book you gave him and Todoroki is going to the movies. Not one of our kids has the ability to make fire outside of those two.”

“You underestimate my kids.”

Hizashi rolled his eyes. “*Relax.* We’re going to have a great date night, Midoriya and his friends will be back by their curfew, and there won’t be any fires to deal with when we get back. We’ll sleep in tomorrow until your Underground lessons with Shinsou and Midoriya and then,” Hizashi waved his free hand enthusiastically, “*therapy!”*

Yes. Therapy. Fucking *finally*.

“Keep an eye on 1-A tomorrow when I’m gone,” Shouta warned absentmindedly, caught up in the fantasy of finally attending his therapy session tomorrow. He couldn’t wait. He had been looking forward to his session since he had made it on Tuesday and in under twenty-four hours, he’d *finally* be sitting in front of his therapist. God, he missed Abe. Let it never be said that Heroes were the only strong

people in society. Abe Daisuke was the strongest man in the world to be able to put up with Shouta and all of his shit. “I heard that Uraraka and Sero want to work on a Super Move for the Provisional exam and I’m half expecting there to be floating tape all over the school.”

“I promise I will. I’ll watch them like a hawk,” Hizashi promised. He raised Shouta’s hand to his lips and pressed a gentle kiss to his knuckles, a smile playing across his lips. “Now, mind turning Dad mode off for a few minutes? Until we get to the restaurant at least?”

A warmth spread across Shouta’s cheeks and he wrinkled his nose. “I’m not, I don’t have a *Dad mode.* If anything, it’s a teacher mode.”

Hizashi raised an eyebrow and smirked. “Babe, I love you. But you’re such a dad. Every time I see you with Shinsou or Midoriya, I’m honestly surprised that you haven’t straight up stolen them from their parents yet. Keyword there being *yet.*”

Shouta rolled his eyes and gently knocked his shoulder against Hizashi’s. “I wouldn’t steal them, ‘Zashi. They both have perfectly fine parents.”

Midoriya Inko, while not fully cleared because of some of the things that Problem Child has said in the past, had been given a little bit of wiggle room because of a package that had been sent to her son the morning before. A care package packed to the brim full of things that Problem Child had forgotten at home, a container full of cookies for the hell spawn, and a new bag of coffee for Shouta. Shouta had had to spend Homeroom unable to sleep because of just how Midoriya kept *loudly gushing* about his mother. It was a double-edged sword in a way. Shouta was able to relax just a little when it came to Midoriya’s mother but walked out of homeroom without his usual naptime.

The world was lucky that Shouta had a cup of his Italian coffee yesterday or otherwise he might’ve ended it then and there.

So, while not fully cleared, the look of adoration on Midoriya’s face aimed towards his mother made Shouta relax if just a little.

“I’m just saying,” Hizashi sang out teasingly, “I wouldn’t mind adopting! Hmmm, Aizawa Hitoshi and Yamada Izuku! It has a ring to it! Or we could have Aizawa Izuku and Yamada Hitoshi! Or maybe combine them! Aiyama or Yamazawa! What’cha think, Kittycat?”

“I think that we’re going to be late for our reservations,” Shouta grumbled, ducking his head so Hizashi wouldn’t be able to see how hard he was blushing and quickening his pace.

Hizashi’s laughter rang through the air as Shouta dragged his husband down the street. Jerk. Shouta wasn’t a dad. He wasn’t.

“. . . I really wouldn’t be opposed to having kids soonish, you know. That wasn’t entirely teasing before. I know that we’ve talked about it before and I know that we both agree on the whole kids thing but, I mean, when things settle down some, maybe?”

“. . . When things settle. Getting a brat of our own sounds good to me, ‘Zashi.”

“Cutting it close there, Demons,” Shouta commented dryly, not looking up from his watch as his five students sprinted through the gates of Yuuei. He hummed as, a few seconds later, his digital clock flipped from 8:59 to 9:00. He looked up and arched an eyebrow at their ruffled hair, flushed cheeks, and large teddy bears of various colours held in all of their arms. He didn’t ask but his pointed silence was question enough.

Shinsou rubbed the back of his head sheepishly and avoided his eyes. “Uh, there’s an arcade at the movie theatre and, um,”

“Uraraka beat us all at table hockey,” Todoroki said blankly. There was a spark of admiration in his eyes. “Several times.”

Uraraka puffed up from behind the giant pink teddy bear she was proudly holding. “Hey, it wasn’t just me who hung us up! You refused to leave until you won us all a stuffy at the crane machine!”

Todoroki blinked and tilted his head. “I did it, didn’t I?”

Shouta sighed and pinched the bridge of his nose. Well, that explained all the stuffed animals, at the very least. “All right, brats. You’re on school grounds so I suppose that’s good enough.” He waved a dismissive hand at them, ignoring the pure relief that had bloomed within him once he had seen the group of five sprinting towards the school. He was *not* a dad. He was a teacher who was relieved that he wouldn’t have to go galivanting off into the night after his wayward

students, that was all. “You have an hour until you’re expected to be in the dorms for the night.” He paused and looked over them critically, just now realizing that the two people he assigned to watch over them weren’t there. “Where’s Amajiki and Togata? Did you kill them?”

They better not have. That would be so much paperwork.

Midoriya squeaked and frantically shook his head. “No! Of course not sensei,” he cried, as if Shouta’s comment was ridiculous and not completely viable with these five. “They got off the train with us but since they don’t have to be back on school grounds until eleven, they decided to go get some ice cream. They said we should be fine since it’s just a five-minute walk from the train station to here and we were planning on running anyway.”

Shouta frowned but ultimately let it go. It was a five-minute walk and it wasn’t like Amajiki and Togata knew exactly how much trouble his kids could get into in just five minutes. After all, their first years had been *normal.* “Whatever. They’re not my problems anyway,” he huffed, deciding to leave it up to Snipe and Cementoss to deal with their students. He turned away from his students and started to walk back to the dorms. His students all immediately scrambled to catch up until they were all clustered around him as they walked. He arched an eyebrow but didn’t say anything. He just hummed at their babbling at how much fun they had and nodded in all the appropriate moments.

“Thank you so much, sensei, it was so much fun to leave the school for a bit,” Midoriya gushed, practically bouncing on his toes. He was holding Iida’s hand, bouncing so high that the top of his head brushed the taller boy’s shoulders. He squeaked a little when his feet left the ground, floating up until he was eye to eye with both Iida and Shouta, the latter of whom just gave him a tired look. Midoriya blushed and puffed out his cheeks, obviously ignoring Uraraka giggling and Shinsou taking a picture as he slowly lowered himself to the ground with a look of great concentration.

He was getting faster with that. Good.

Shouta waited until Midoriya’s feet were touching the ground again to grunt out, “Well, you didn’t run into any trouble while you were out. Keep on like that and we’ll see about releasing you out onto the unsuspecting populace more often.” His lips twitched up into a smirk at the sputtered denials from Iida and Midoriya.

“What about you, sensei,” Uraraka chirped, hugging her new teddy bear happily. “Did you have a good evening?”

Shouta hummed and shrugged. “There were no villain attacks,” he said vaguely. It had been a good start to the date night. He and Hizashi had a wonderful dinner, gone to a short movie of their own, and even managed to stop by a bookstore before they had to get back to Yuuei to do a headcount to make sure that all of their brats were in their respective dorms. Which would take until the ten o’clock curfew since his brats would insist on talking to him, giving him food they made, or asking for help with homework. Hell spawn would probably look at him with those smiles that said that they were *happy* to see him. But the night wasn’t over yet. Shouta had a night full of cuddles with his husband and romance movies in their apartment to look forward to.

God, Shouta’s life was good when it didn’t involve villain attacks or his horror show of a class breaking shit.

The dorms came into view and Shouta was about to remind the group that curfew was in an hour so if they needed to run back to the school to grab something to do it before ten o’clock when Todoroki tensed next to him, shifting a little in front of Midoriya protectively. And it was obvious why.

In front of the 1-A dorms, pacing agitatedly in front of the front door, was Bakugou. There was smoke rising off his clenched hands and in one of them was the little book about Quirkless people that Shouta had lent him.

And as Shouta quickened his pace to find out exactly what the boy wanted, the thought that hit him the hardest was that Bakugou *better* not have damaged his book. There had only ever been five hundred printed and it had been a headache and a fucking half tracking it down. That book *better* not be charred.

He ignored four out of five members of the group behind him stopping and gathering around the fifth protectively, walking over to Bakugou and arching an eyebrow. “Bakugou.” The boy snapped his head over to him, eyes wild and teeth bared in a snarl. The boy stopped dead in his tracks, almost vibrating right out of the Hawks hoodie he was wearing. Funnily enough, when his eyes strayed over to where Midoriya was being surrounded protectively, Bakugou just huffed and turned back to Shouta angrily.

“You weren’t at the teachers’ dorms,” the boy snarled, obviously just barely keeping his temper in check. “And you do headcounts around this time.”

Shouta narrowed his eyes. Well, if the boy wanted to talk then they should probably have a bit of privacy. “Hell spawn,” he called over his shoulder. “Inside. Tell the other brats that I’ll be back for headcount in a bit.” God knows that the brats were going to riot if he didn’t get there to spend time with them soon. He jerked his head towards the 1-C dorms. “Bakugou, let’s walk.”

Bakugou clicked his tongue irritably and turned away from the others, pointedly staring at the grass as he waited for the hero students to leave. There was a pause before, slowly, the group walked past Shouta and towards the dorms. Todoroki had his ice wielding side pointed threateningly at Bakugou, Uraraka had all ten of her fingers splayed out warningly, Iida was glaring at the boy from behind his glasses and Shinsou kept his eyes on Bakugou the entire time. Midoriya was kept in the center of the four, only his green tuff of hair visible from the cluster his friends had placed him in.

Great. Problem Child must’ve let slip the rest of his friends about why Bakugou was expelled from the Hero Course. Probably not the entire story, Shouta doubted that Uraraka would’ve been able to hold herself back from killing Bakugou if she knew everything, but enough for them to know to stand protectively between their friend and his tormentor.

Great.

Shouta waited until all five of his kids walked through the door and it clicked behind them before sticking out his hand pointedly. Bakugou huffed and practically shoved the book at Shouta. He took it and turned it over carefully, looking for any scorch marks and letting himself relax when he didn’t find any. “So,” he said dryly, turning away and starting the walk back to the 1-C dorms. “Is there a reason why you decided to wait outside the 1-A dorms until I came to do the headcount? If you wanted to return my book, you could’ve found me tomorrow.”

There was a low growl and the sounds of quick footsteps until Bakugou was at his side, glaring up at him furiously. “That fucking book,” he growled out. The smoke coming from his clenched hands was getting dark enough that Shouta flashed him a warning look. Bakugou huffed and let out an angry breath, unclenching his hands,

letting off a few tiny explosions, before crossing his arms. “That, the shit in it. It can’t be true. It fucking can’t be.”

“It is. True stories, every single one of them,” Shouta said bluntly. He shrugged. “You don’t have to believe me. Though, the fact that it says *True stories* on the fact and cites the statistics given in it should’ve been a given.”

Bakugou scowled up at him. “It fucking can’t be! It, it says that the life expectancy for Quirkless people right now is fucking fifty! And that’s in fucking Canada! I looked it up and it says that it’s fucking forty-five over here! That can’t be true!”

Ah. So that was the cause of this. Shouta sighed and held the book between his arm and chest before stuffing his hands into his pockets. “It is,” he said tiredly. He felt just as exhausted as he had when he first read those numbers when he was sixteen. And the number had been a few years higher when he was that age. “The age of expectancy for Quirkless people is currently forty-five years of age in Japan. Since we and a few other countries have a much lower population of Quirkless people, it’s very easy to forget about them or ignore the laws in place that are hurting them. Suicide rates, hate crimes, various hospitals refusing to treat them, laws aimed against them, and various other reasons are why the average life expectancy for Quirkless people keeps lowering each year.”

A small part of Shouta shrivelled up and died at the sudden thought that his old friend was almost thirty now. Sakura was turning thirty in just a few months. Just a decade and a half away from hitting that forty-five year mark. Shouta had to fight the urge to punch the closest wall.

Breathe, a voice that sounded like a mix of Hizashi and his therapist reminded him. Breathe. You’re talking to a student right now. Just breathe.

“You can’t deny the facts, Bakugou. You can ignore them if you want,” Shouta said with a dismissive shrug. “But there’s no denying them. Quirkless people usually live just half as long as us Quirked people if they’re lucky. And that’s only if they’re lucky. And it has nothing to do with them dying naturally early. It has everything to do with discrimination.” Shouta sighed, rubbing at his eyes. God, he was exhausted. God, he wanted to cuddle with his husband and cats. *God,* he couldn’t wait until his therapy appointment tomorrow. “You can bury your head in the sand if you want or get furious at me for

informing you about this very real fact. But it won't stop being true."

Bakugou was burning holes into the side of Shouta's head with how hotly he was glaring at him. But Shouta didn't know what else to say to the boy. These were the facts. The hard, awful, terrible facts. But they were the facts. What was he supposed to do? Lie and tell him that, no, what he read in that book was wrong? Lie and say that Midoriya Izuku, had he stayed Quirkless, would've had a very real chance of dying before he had hit Shouta's age even if he hadn't become a hero? He couldn't.

And he wouldn't.

"That's . . . *such bullshit,*" Bakugou hissed, turning his glare down at the ground furiously.

"It is," Shouta agreed, feeling exhaustion deep in his bones. He stopped in front of the 1-C dorms. He could see Hizashi through the windows, sitting on one of the couches and laughing at something one of the kids, Jackson, was telling him. "Go on. I'm sure Yamada-sensei is wanting to check you down for the headcount."

There was a long silence where Bakugou just stood at his side, glaring down at the grass with a rage that seemed to burn the air all around him. Finally, he spoke, lower and full of less anger than what Shouta was expecting. "Do you have any more of those things? Books about . . . Quirkless people?"

Shouta arched an eyebrow but didn't question this sudden interest. "Yes. Swing by my office tomorrow around eight o'clock and I'll give you another. Try not to use your Quirk on it like you almost did on this one."

Bakugou huffed but nodded, trudging off into the 1-C dorms without a word. Shouta winced when the boy slammed the door but didn't comment. He just turned around and started to walk towards his own students' dorms.

Time for 1-A's headcount.

Shouta walked through the streets of the false city the next day calmly, slowly and carefully scanning his surroundings as he looked for any hint of his two wayward charges. It was coming up near eleven on Saturday morning and nearing the end of Shinsou and

Midoriya's training for the day. He had sent them both off for one last activity before they finished up. Just an easy game of hide and seek. With Shouta being the seeker.

He raised the paintball gun in his hands and looked around with a bored expression on his face.

Yes. Just a simple, easy game of hide and seek.

He had already tagged each of his students a few times. After all, this version of the game didn't end when he initially found them. No, it had a thirty-minute time limit and the game lasted until time was up. And Shinsou and Midoriya were doing well. Much better than expected, quite frankly. Even with Shouta going easy on them, Midoriya had only been hit twice so far and managed to slip away almost immediately afterward each time while Shinsou had only been found once but hadn't gotten away in time to avoid the four shots Shouta had sent at his back. Which was covered by standard paintball safety equipment.

He wasn't a *total* monster.

Shouta glanced at his watch and hummed. Just a minute left. Honestly, this was better than Shouta had expected. Thirty minutes and only found three times collectively? Not bad. Not bad at all. He was going to have to start going harder on them in training if they were already this advanced at being able to mask their presences.

But he could focus on that later. Right now, he had the feeling of eyes burning a hole into his back. Shouta had kids to shoot.

Shouta closed his eyes and breathed, listening for the smallest sound. Deep breath in. Deep breath out. There was the tiniest sound of a shoe scuffing on the sidewalk behind him and Shouta whirled around, shooting off two rounds just as the alarm on his watch went off. The two rounds hit Shinsou and Midoriya right in the chest. Shinsou grunt and stumble back while Midoriya, who was in the air and halfway in the process of picking Shinsou up, just wrinkled his nose down at the red paint splatter in annoyance.

"Not bad, Hell spawn," Shouta grunted, resting his paintball gun against his shoulder lazily. He eyed the splatters on his students with a frown. "Of course, you'd be dead if this was real life."

"Sorry, sensei," Midoriya sighed, fingering the part of his uniform were he had been hit sheepishly. The red splatter was right

over where his heart rested and it reminded Shouta of one of his very serious nightmares that often involved his students.

Breathe. You have therapy in just under an hour, Shouta. Just breathe.

Shouta sighed and shook his head. “Don’t apologize. Get better. That’s all there is to it. You did well for the first time doing this. We’ll do this again later on.”

Shinsou’s lips twitched up into a smirk. “Will we get to shoot you?”

Shouta snorted and started to walk back to the gates of the city, knocking his knuckles against Shinsou’s shoulder as he passed him. “We’ll see, Gremlin. Let’s go. You have your cool down stretches to do and I have an appointment to get to. You brats are giving me a migraine.”

“Yes, sensei!” Immediately, Midoriya and Shinsou were walking on either side of him, Midoriya practically bouncing eagerly next to him while Shinsou was hunched over, looking like a mini version of Shouta himself. If some were looking at Midoriya and Shinsou and tried to connect them to a hero from the previous generation, they might connect Midoriya and Hizashi. Shouta disagreed.

Midoriya was a lot more like Oboro. And that terrified Shouta.

“Sensei, are you going to stop by the dorms tonight for dinner,” Midoriya asked eagerly, beaming up at him happily. “Kirishima-kun said that he was going to make dinner tonight, a really spicy curry! Super spicy! He said that he needed to go talk to someone to get the exact recipe but he said that he should have it by the time he has to make dinner! A-and Satou-kun is making carrot cake for afterwards!”

Oh, fuck yes. Fuck. Yes. Shouta had only had Satou’s baking once before but it had been memorable enough for Shouta to immediately know that he would be eating dinner at the 1-A dorms tonight. If that kid ever wanted extra income when he became a hero, Shouta would definitely suggest starting up a bakery.

Shouta shrugged nonchalantly. “I’ll have to,” he grunted out. “Can’t have you kids burning down the dorms, can I?”

‘Well, I mean,” Shinsou shrugged and smirked up at him. “You *could.*”

“Paperwork,” Shouta drawled, gently rapping his knuckles against Shinsou’s temple, “is the bane of my existence and why I do half of the things I do.”

He ignored Shinsou’s laughter as he walked out of the fake city training grounds, walking towards the duffle bag he had thrown on the ground at the start of the training exercise. When he had pulled out his paintball gun and turned on his students with a sharp, sadistic grin. Now, he carefully slid the gun back into the bag, pulling out something else as he did so.

Shouta glanced over his shoulders at his two students. Shinsou and Midoriya were whispering to each other as they did their cool down stretches, Midoriya giggling into one of his hands over something Shinsou was saying to him. They looked happy, which was a nice change of pace. Especially with these two. Things were going much better than Shouta could’ve hoped with Shinsou’s transfer into the hero course. A small, illogical part of him had been terrified that his class wouldn’t accept his protégé and Shinsou would’ve been left on the side lines. In the hero course but with no friends or allies to accept him and watch his back. It was always a danger with those with villainous quirks, something that Shouta knew better than most.

But, no, his class had once again made him proud. With the exception of one, they had accepted him with open arms and turned on the one who refused to. Midoriya and his friends had gone the extra mile, eagerly pulling Shinsou into their group and into their activities. Both in and out of school. It was nice to see. When he had arrived at the gates the night before to see them off and saw Shinsou there, surrounded by friends and trying his best to force down a smile and failing spectacularly, Shouta had barely been able to suppress a smile of his own.

And as for Midoriya, the kid was thriving now that Shouta was giving him the proper attention that he had needed since the start. Smiling wider and more real than he ever had in Shouta’s presence. In just a few days of getting Float, his ability with his new Quirk had impressed Shouta. It also made him not want to think about what could’ve happened if Shouta hadn’t been made aware of One for All and all of Midoriya’s history. He didn’t like what his mind came up with. Not in the slightest.

Shouta knew himself well enough to know his mind would see Midoriya gain a brand-new quirk and immediately go All for One. He knew his student well enough at this point to know that Midoriya

wasn't a traitor. Even without knowing what he knew about Midoriya now, Shouta would've *known* his student wouldn't betray them. But even knowing that his student wasn't a traitor, his view of the student would've been changed by that misconception. There were only so many ways that Midoriya could've been given a quirk and it was either that it was given freely or forced upon him. And both options would've given Shouta different types of migraines to deal with.

God. Shouta never would've thought that he would be thankful for these brand-new headaches.

But he was. Knowing what he knew about Midoriya helped Shouta shift his teaching style accordingly for the boy. And it also made Shouta open his eyes for things that he didn't have to with his other students. Midoriya had a Quirk. But he didn't have a Quirked body. An extra toe joint, sure, but Midoriya had plenty of other things that the rest of 1-A didn't.

For example. *Apparently,* Quirkless people had an exploding organ.

Yes. An exploding organ. An organ with no purpose but to sit there and, if it was so inclined, explode. Because why wouldn't Problem Child have something like that in his body?

It made Shouta cringe to think that if Midoriya never had told him about his past then Shouta wouldn't know what to know if Midoriya ever had problems specifically tied to his Quirklessness. He would've seen the symptoms of Appendicitis, something that Shouta had only heard about in history books, and thought that Midoriya had a simple stomach bug. It wouldn't be until the organ exploded that Shouta would've known that something was much worse than he thought.

Shouta took in a long, deep breath and waited for a few seconds before letting it out. He did know. He was aware. And now he could be on the lookout.

"Alright, demons," Shouta grunted, picking up the thing he had grabbed from his office this morning and tucking it under his arm. "Back to the dorms. I'll be gone for the next hour or so but the rest of the staff know to keep an eye out. They'll know if you try plotting anything."

Shinsou, somehow both dramatic and deadpan in his actions, placed a hand over his heart. "Sensei. Don't you trust us?"

Shouta met his eyes. “No.”

And, of course, that made both of his students glance at each other and giggle. Fucking brats.

“But before you go. Midoriya.” Shouta grabbed the large book under his arm and held it out in front of him. Midoriya blinked in confusion but took the book, blinking down at it in confusion. “Here.”

It was one of Shouta’s most precious treasures. He had brought it from an online auction with his very first paycheck he had gotten from hero work. Along with portions of Nemuri, Hizashi, and Tensei’s first paychecks too. He had spent years hearing about this franchise and when he had seen the book, full of volumes of hundreds of past stories, Shouta knew that he had to have it. Before now, he had never taken it out of his office and only allowed his students who appreciated the protagonists and themes to read it.

But Shouta had a feeling that Midoriya was going to appreciate this gift more than even Shouta did.

“Bat . . . man?” Midoriya looked up at Shouta in confusion, tilting his head. Shouta could see Shinsou standing behind his friend and looking just as confused. ”Sensei, I’ve never heard of this hero.”

“He’s a pre-quirk comic book hero,” Shouta explained, tapping the cover carefully. “One of the first comic book heroes and one of the most beloved back in the day. A Quirkless hero.”

Midoriya’s head snapped up and his breath hitched. His eyes were wide and Shouta could see the beginnings of tears growing in his eyes. Shinsou hesitated before placing a hand on his shoulder and squeezing gently. “A . . . a Q-Quirkless hero?”

Shouta nodded, looking down at Midoriya softly. “Yes. One of the most popular, back before Quirks were a thing. In this book,” a book almost as large as Midoriya’s head, “is, at least, twenty years’ worth of Batman comics. I can’t say that the stories in this book are from the very beginning of the character’s creation but you’ll be fine understanding what’s going on. Most of the characters in these comics are completely Quirkless. And the ones who aren’t don’t overpower the story.”

“I, sensei,” Midoriya whispered. “I, t-thank you. I’ll take good care of it and make sure to give it back to you soon, I promise.”

“Don’t bother,” Shouta grunted, leaning down and grabbing his duffle bag. He slung it over his shoulder. “It’s yours now, kid. I’ve read it more than enough times. Don’t worry about breaking the spine. The previous owner did that long before I got my hands on it” The college student who had put it up for auction obviously didn’t care about the book half as much as he should’ve. He went to warn Midoriya about the pages near the back that stuck together, something that Shouta hadn’t been able to fix no matter how much time he put into it, when a small body slammed into his and clung to his body suit. Shouta froze, hands hovering over Midoriya’s back as a chocked sob escaped the boy.

Oh fuck. A crying child. Oh, *fuck*. What did he do now? Shouta met Shinsou’s eyes and saw the same panicked confusion that he was sure was mirrored in his.

Shouta slowly brought his hand down on Midoriya’s back, just holding the small teen as Midoriya sobbed into his chest. He met Shinsou’s eyes over Midoriya’s head and jerked his head in the direction the dorms. The purple haired boy hesitated, obviously reluctant to leave his friend in this state, but slowly walked away. Shouta had the feeling that he was just out of sight and just barely out of earshot. Giving them privacy but close enough to be there for Midoriya if he was needed.

Midoriya’s had his face buried into Shouta’s chest, his sobs slightly muffled by Shouta’s hero uniform. It was the sobs of someone who had just been saved, who had been *so sure* that they were going to die that all of their emotions were now being released in just one go. Shouta had seen Midoriya cry of course, but never like this. Not even in the past two weeks with Midoriya telling Shouta about his past and learning things that he should’ve learnt a long time ago. No, these were tears that Midoriya had been holding onto for a long, long time. And the thing that brought it to the surface was a book of comics about an old, forgotten, Quirkless hero.

As Shouta tried his best to comfort his crying student, he distantly wondered what would’ve happened if Midoriya had access to these stories from the very start.

“I-I’m s-s-sorry,” Midoriya hiccupped after a few minutes more of sobbing, pulling away from Shouta and wiping at his eyes with his free hand. His other was pressing the large book into his chest almost protectively. “I, I’m s-sorry, sen-sensei. I, I just, there aren’t, th-there’s never been a h-hero like me be-before. N-Not, not e-even in b-books.

He, h-he wasn't a w-weaking, was he? An-and people liked this one? T-they really did?"

Shouta crouched down in front of Midoriya, fishing one of his several handkerchiefs from his pockets and pressing it into the boy's hand. "I promise you, Midoriya. Batman is *anything* but a weakling. And everyone loved him," Shouta promised. He smirked, leaning forward like he was telling him a secret. "And you know what, Midoriya? In the universe that these comics are set in, he was the one that all the Quirked villains they knew they needed to watch. Because they all knew who was the most likely to take them down."

The memory of Midoriya's bright, sunshine smile followed Shouta as he walked Midoriya and Shinsou back to the dorms, changed out of his hero uniform, and made his way to his therapy appointment.

Shouta always felt lighter after a therapy session. Not necessarily better but definitely lighter.

The way that Shouta saw therapy was like someone reaching into his brain and helping Shouta root through all of the shit that had been piling up and then pointing out the things that were unhealthy and Shouta needed to start getting rid of. All the bad habits that he had built up or the unhealthy thoughts that were festering in his mind. Shouta's parents had placed him into therapy when he was ten years old and Shouta had stayed with it ever since, even after leaving his parents' house and pretending to be a competent adult. It helped, especially in Shouta's line of work.

He doubted that he would be half as well adjusted as he was if he didn't have his therapist.

He leaned back in the passenger seat of his car, just letting himself breathe after the good cry he had had in his therapist's office. Abe Daisuke wasn't afraid to dig and he wasn't at all concerned to see Shouta cry like most everyone else that Shouta knew would be. If anything, the man was probably happy to see him comfortable enough to cry. Especially since they both remembered the near emotionless eighteen-year-old, still reeling from the death of a close friend, that had originally hunted him down for his services.

Shouta had come a long way since then. He still had a long way to go but he was definitely getting there.

“Feeling a bit better, Love,” Hizashi asked, pulling into Yuuei’s parking lot and into their parking spot. He had decided to drive Shouta to his therapist since, well, Shouta usually wasn’t in the right headspace to use heavy machinery after his sessions. He turned off the ignition and smiled at Shouta, reaching over and gently rubbing a thumb over his cheek. Shouta hummed and leaned into it, letting his eyes drift closed.

“Definitely,” he muttered softly. “Abe-san is an absolute bastard and I love him.”

Hizashi laughed softly. “You love anyone who’s willing to call you out on your shit.”

Well, Hizashi wasn’t exactly wrong.

“There aren’t enough people out there who will,” Shouta huffed. He leaned into Hizashi’s hand, pressing a gentle kiss to the pulse point on Hizashi’s wrist, before pulling away before any of the students could walk by and see them. “C’mon. You said that there were some 3-C students who wanted you to go over English with them, didn’t you? And I need to go see what the hell spawn have done in my absence.” Shouta had a little mental bet going with himself. On one hand, he was betting that there would be at least one metaphorical fire to put out. On the other hand, he was betting that the fire he’d be putting out wouldn’t be metaphorical in the least.

He looked forward to seeing which bet he’d be winning today.

Hizashi rolled his eyes fondly, getting out of the car with Shouta right behind. “Oh, c’mon, Love. Your kids aren’t *that* bad.”

“Just last night, you were calling them punk ass kids.”

“. . . Well, they’re a lot better than some of your previous classes.”

Shouta snorted, closing the car door behind him and turning to the 1-A’s dorms. “That’s not as high of an accomplishment as you might think it is, ‘Zashi-“

“IT’S NONE OF YOUR FUCKING BUSINESS, SHITTY HAIR, NOW LEAVE ME THE FUCK ALONE!!!”

Both Shouta and Hizashi’s heads snapped around and before their brains had caught up, their legs were already moving towards

the sounds of screaming. One minute. They had been on school grounds for barely sixty seconds before an incident came about that demanded their attention.

Because of *fucking* course.

Shouta found the source of the screaming first. Not too far from the parking lot, near the 1-C dorms, stood Bakugou and Kirishima. Both tense and looking two seconds from swinging at each other. Which was rather odd. Bakugou might always be down for a fight but Kirishima was a much calmer boy. Always ready for a friendly spar but slow to actual anger and never one to swing first outside of the training grounds. But now? His fists and wrists were hardened and Kirishima looked like he was closer to starting a fight than even Bakugou himself, the boy who had smoke rising from his own clenched hands. There was a crumbled piece of paper in Kirishima's hands that had what Shouta thought might be instructions of some kind scribbled on it.

"Just tell me I'm wrong," Kirishima screamed back, taking a step closer to Bakugou. The two of them were just barely an inch apart at this point. "Just tell me I'm a fucking idiot and that I'm wrong! Tell me that I'm a fucking moron for thinking that my best friend could do so fucking unmanly something like that! Just tell me I'm fucking wrong! Please!"

"It's none of your goddamn business, you nosey fucking bastard!"

Just as Kirishima's fists twitched and he looked about ready to truly start the fight, Shouta saw his husband open his mouth out of the corner of his eye and braced himself for the shout that ripped its way out of Hizashi's throat just a second later. Much, much quieter than one that he'd use against a villain but more than loud enough to get the attention of the two screaming students. *"HEY! BREAK IT UP!"*

Shouta didn't slow down, not even when Bakugou stepped back away from Kirishima or as Kirishima lowered his rising hands. He quickly made his way to the two of them, grabbing Kirishima's shoulder and pulling him back a few steps. "What," he hissed, flashing red eyes at both of them and watching their quirks be erased, "is going on here? One of you start talking. *Now.*"

Kirishima pulled at Shouta's grip on him, eyes locked on Bakugou like he was barely aware of the two adults' presence. "Tell

me I'm wrong," he begged. He wasn't screaming but the intensity was still there. "Tell me that I'm *fucking wrong*."

Shouta scowled as Bakugou gritted his teeth, not saying a word. "Enough," Shouta snapped, pulling Kirishima a few steps further back. "I don't care *what* is going on here." He did but now was not the time to interrogate. It was time to de-escalate the situation. He met Hizashi's eyes who nodded before getting between Kirishima and Bakugou, staring down at his student sternly. "You're with me. Let's go. *Now."* He let go of Kirishima and started walking towards the school. After a moment, hard footsteps followed. As if Kirishima had subconsciously hardened his feet without meaning to in his fury.

Great.

"Get a handle on your Quirk, Kirishima," Shouta said firmly, giving his student a stern look as they made their way to the school and Shouta's office. "You're going to dent the school's floor if you keep going like this." He softened his tone just a degree. "Take a deep breath and then let it out. Keep going like that." There were a few seconds where there was nothing but silence and continued hard footsteps. But Kirishima finally let out a long breath and his footsteps slowly lightened until they matched Shouta's own soft ones. He ushered Kirishima into the school, ignoring the distant sounds of Bakugou's screaming furiously at Hizashi.

Hizashi could handle Bakugou. Kirishima was Shouta's problem to deal with.

He didn't say anything to his student as he led him through the halls. There weren't many students in the school at the moment. Not that Shouta could blame them. He was rarely seen at school on Saturdays when he was a student unless his teachers demanded it. There were a few General Education students using empty classrooms and Shouta could hear the sounds of laughter coming from one of the support labs. But he ignored them all and led Kirishima into the teachers' lounge and jerked his head to his private office. Kirishima, thankfully, didn't complain. He marched into Shouta's office, head ducked and hands shaking. Shouta followed him and closed the door behind them both. When he turned around, Kirishima was already sitting in the chair in front of Shouta's desk, waiting patiently for what was about to come.

Shouta tilted his head up to the ceiling and took a deep breath in. He closed his eyes and spent a few seconds just breathing and

focusing on calming down. Kirishima wasn't a kid who snapped, not without reason. And especially not with Bakugou. His relationship with the explosive teen was something that Shouta couldn't understand in the slightest. Kirishima was closer with Bakugou than anyone else. Even after Bakugou's expulsion from the hero course, Shouta had seen his student seek his friend out on several occasions. But ever since Wednesday, Kirishima had been quieter. Thoughtful in a way that he often wasn't. And for him to get into a screaming match, nearly an all-out brawl, with Bakugou was something that Shouta needed to treat delicately.

It was only once Shouta felt that he was calmed down enough that he walked forward, grabbing the chair beside Kirishima's and turning it to face the boy. He sat down, choosing to be close with his student instead of sitting behind his desk. Kirishima relaxed a little at the proximity and turned his chair around to match Shouta's. He still wouldn't meet his teacher's eyes. "So. Want to tell me what was going on out there?"

Kirishima brought his fists up to his chest, keeping his head ducked. He didn't say anything, just staring at the floor silently.

Shouta arched an eyebrow. "Kirishima. I like to think that I know my students well enough by this point in the year. You aren't the type of boy to get into a fight without thinking that you're in the right. I also know that you and Bakugou are the best of friends." He paused, watching Kirishima's hands clench in response to his words. He softened his tone slightly. "I'd like to know exactly what happened between the two of you. Or, at the very least, what caused the fight. I won't force you to tell me. But you should talk to someone. Whether that be another student, me, or, if you're comfortable, Hound Dog."

There was a long silence before Kirishima finally broke and started speaking, his voice low and tense. Like he fighting tears. "I'm such a fucking idiot," he muttered, wiping at his tears furiously. "Such a *fucking* idiot."

Oh no. That was *not* something Shouta liked hearing from any student, especially from a student like Kirishima who was usually so positive and kind to himself. "Kirishima," he said sternly, ducking his head to try and meet the boy's eyes. Kirishima met his eyes for a spilt second before looking away. "You know that I don't allow swearing in my presence. But more importantly, I don't appreciate self-deprecation. You are *not* an idiot. You are a very bright young man and are going to be a fantastic hero one day. Do you understand me?"

Kirishima's mouth twisted and his jaw trembled before he nodded.

"Good." For the second time that day, Shouta pulled out a handkerchief and offered it to one of his students. Kirishima sniffled and took it, pressing it against his eyes as he let out a shaky breath. "Now, do you want to talk about it or would you like to head to the dorms to calm down? You don't have to talk about it right now but I would like you to consider talking about it. Whatever that was."

". . . I know that you told us not to press," Kirishima finally choked out. He was trembling a little in his seat, though whether that was from his tears or his anger, Shouta didn't know. "A-and, and I wasn't going to, sensei. I wasn't. I know that Midoribro is super sensitive and whatever he had to do with Bakugbro . . . Bakugou being transferred wasn't anyone's business but his. I wasn't gonna ask anyone anything. Whatever Bakugou did, it wasn't something I was gonna try and find out. I wasn't."

Shouta's frown deepened but he didn't say anything. He just kept watching Kirishima, waiting patiently for the boy to finish.

"B-but, then, that thing on Wednesday happened. With Mineta? How he was talking about Quirkless people. Y-you remember?"

"Yes," Shouta said with a small nod. "I remember."

"A-and how Midoribro k-kinda checked out after that. And I started thinking a-about how B-Bakugou a-always acted around him. F-from the start of school, sensei. H-he called Midoribro Quirkless like it was, was an insult and, I don't know. I've heard people call other people that as insults, even if they're not Quirkless, y'know? I-it's in poor taste and really unmanly. But he never called him that since then and, I don't know, I thought that it was a one-time thing." Kirishima let out a shaky breath and pressed his handkerchief harder against his eyes. "But I kept thinking about that and then, I remembered Midoribro's shoes and then," he cut himself off suddenly and shook his head. "I'm sorry, I, I shouldn't s-say, sensei."

Shouta stared at Kirishima, a bad feeling settling in his gut. It seemed that Kirishima had figured something out. Maybe he hadn't stumbled across the *true* truth but he had definitely stumbled across *something.* "And why not?"

"C-cause it's Midoribro's business. Not mine. I shouldn't have said that much."

Through all of the different, conflicting emotions Shouta was feeling, he felt a spark of pride. He had a feeling what Kirishima had figured out and instead of foolishly telling Shouta something when it wasn't his place to, he refused to. He kept his mouth shut. Even if he had almost squealed so by accident. Kirishima knew that Shouta had spoken up for Quirkless people during class but that didn't mean that he would be okay with a Quirkless person or even a false negative being in his class. Shouta respected Kirishima's refusal to potentially hurt his friend.

He leaned forward. "You know," he said, injecting calm into his tone. "It's rather rare that someone knows about how Quirkless people have to wear different shoes than Quirked people." Kirishima's head snapped up, his eyes wide. Shouta met them evenly and calmly. "I only learnt about them a couple of weeks ago myself. The brand of shoes is called Primordial. In case you were wondering. Only Quirkless people and False Negatives, a person who was born with a Quirkless body but gained a Quirk later on in life, are able to comfortably wear them. Midoriya is part of the later group. And, judging from the fact that you've managed to keep it under wraps that you figured this out, I'm assuming that you understand that this is something that Midoriya wants to be spread around."

"I get that," Kirishima said quickly, sitting up straighter in his seat. He looked relieved that he hadn't accidentally spilt Midoriya's secret to someone who wasn't aware. No. Someone who was in a position of power over Midoriya who wasn't aware. "I have a Quirkless cousin, sensei. I know that she goes through hell most days and I would never go around telling people something like that. Never! I promise! I haven't told anyone!"

Shouta held up a hand. "I believe you, Kirishima. Relax."

Kirishima let out a relieved breath, relaxing a little in his chair. "I've heard about False Negatives before and I figured that Midoribro must be one of them. I didn't think about it right away. I mean, I saw the shoes on the first day but I figured that I must be seeing things and forgot about it but then I remembered that False Negatives are a thing and, uh, yeah." He ducked his head. "Sorry. I, uh, went off-topic, didn't I?'

Shouta's lips twitched up a little. "Yes. You're fine though. Keep going."

Kirishima nodded, running his free hand through his hair

sheepishly. The potential tears had stopped at the very least. That was good. “R-right. Well, um, I remembered that and suddenly Bakugou and Midoriya’s interactions didn’t seem like they used to. I mean, I always figured that they were playing around. Old school friends that liked to roughhouse. But then Midoribro never started it, y’know? It was always Bakugou. And he kept going straight for Midoribro during training sessions, a lot more violent than he would with anyone else. And, and kept calling him Deku, even before he made it his Hero name. And I realized that Midoribro must’ve only gotten his Quirk really recently. Which meant that Bakugou thought that he was really Quirkless all this time. And,” his shoulders slumped and he stared at the floor, “well, my cousin says that there’s a reason why she tries to avoid the people with really strong Quirks at her college. Cause they got big egos and don’t mind roughing up a Quirkless, Quirkless weakling.” He spat out the last two words, looking disgusted with himself for even letting the words passing his lips.

Shouta stared at his student for a second before sighing and shaking his head. “So, you confronted Bakugou over what you believe is a history of bullying between him and Midoriya?” He suddenly felt exhausted.

Whoever said that Kirishima Eijiro was an idiot didn’t know the boy very well.

“. . . I was right, wasn’t I?” Kirishima’s face twisted again and he pressed the handkerchief against his eyes again. “I-I was *right*.”

“I’m not going to confirm or deny anything. Because, ultimately, it’s none of your business,” Shouta said sternly but gently. “There’s a reason I told you all not to dig into what happened. Because it’s between Bakugou and Midoriya. It has nothing to do with you or anyone else.” He held up his hand when Kirishima puffed up and went to speak. “It has *nothing* to do with, Kirishima. And I’m going to have to ask that you don’t tell anyone else about your theory. I understand what you must be feeling right now and I appreciate you attempting to stand up for one of your friends. But it’s not your place.”

Kirishima screwed up his face and he blinked furiously. “But, but, *sensei*. What if . . . what if I’m friends with a *bully*? What if I’ve been standing there for fucking *weeks?* Stupid enough to think that they were *roughhousing* instead of Bakugou just targeting him for something that Midoribro couldn’t even control?”

. . . What was Shouta supposed to say to that?

Shouta sighed. He had never been in Kirishima's spot. He had always been the bullied. He had been in Midoriya's spot. Forced to sit there and face forward, trying to ignore the people staring at him and judging him for something that he couldn't control. Something that, when he was much younger and not as confident in himself or his Quirk, he hated just as much as they all did. It was why Shouta was able to connect so easily with students like Shinsou or Midoriya. But he wasn't sure what to say to Kirishima right now. A kid with a heart as big and as bright as the sun.

A kid who had unwittingly befriended a bully. A bully who was slowly learning the error of his ways but a bully all the same.

"I don't know what to tell you, Kirishima," Shouta said honestly. "I wish that I did. I really do. But I don't. But, I do know that going and screaming in Bakugou's face isn't something you should be doing. It doesn't matter how angry or confused or even betrayed you feel. That isn't acceptable."

Kirishima ducked his head and stared down at the floor. "Am I in trouble, sensei?"

"No," Shouta said, shaking his head. "But, I am going to suggest that you speak to Hound Dog. Again, I won't force you to. But I believe that speaking to a professional about what you're feeling right now could be extremely helpful."

Kirishima frowned thoughtfully but slowly nodded. "I . . . Okay. Just one session though, right?"

Shouta shrugged, reaching over to his desk and grabbing a blank sheet of paper. He scribbled down Kirishima's name and a note to make an appointment with Hound Dog for him. "If that's what you want. But, afterward, if you want to have more sessions then all you have to do is to either speak to Hound Dog or myself. It's up to you, Kirishima. Understand?"

". . . Yes, sensei."

"Good." Shouta looked up from the paper at Kirishima, taking a moment to access him. The boy was more relaxed now. Still angry and weepy eyed but less so than he had been when he had walked into the office. "Alright. You'll be called down to Hound Dog's office probably tomorrow or on Monday to talk to him. For now, stay away from Bakugou. I get you're angry but that won't excuse having a fistfight with him in the middle of school property. You're not in trouble now

but if I find the two of you fighting each other then you will be." He flashed his eyes red in warning. "Got it?"

Kirishima winced but nodded. "I'll stay away, sensei."

Shouta fought the urge to sigh in relief. Good. This better be a one-time event. At least it happened during the daylight. If Shouta had had to go out in the middle of the night to tear two brawling students away from each other then annoyed wouldn't even scratch the surface of his feelings on the matter. "Alright. Now, as for the fact that you've figured out Midoriya being a False Negative. I understand that you haven't told anyone and I trust that you won't. But, after you've taken time to calm down and center yourself, I want you to inform Midoriya that you know and that you won't speak about this without his permission."

"I can do that, sensei," Kirishima said, giving Shouta a smile that was more reminiscent of his usual ones. "I can definitely do that!"

Shouta nodded, standing up and nodding towards the door. "Alright then. C'mon, back to the dorms. I need to check in on the rest of the brats and you're heading to your room for some quiet time. Take a nap. I promise you, kid, naps fix most of everything. Or go spend time with the rest of your friends. I don't care what you do as long as you're calming down while you do it."

His student stood up, wiping at his eyes one last time before tucking the handkerchief away in his pocket. His students knew well enough at this point that Shouta didn't want them back after giving them out. At this point, at least six of his students had handkerchiefs of their own tucked away in their own pockets to pull out when they started to cry. "I think I need some time to myself, Aizawa-sensei," Kirishima said softly. He gave Shouta a shaky, slightly wobbly smile. "Thanks, sensei. I'm, I'm really sorry for screaming at Bakugou. I mean, I'm not? But, like, I mean I'm sorry that I started it. Cause I did. I was the one who asked him about Midoribro and everything when he was giving him the recipe that I asked for." He held up the crumbled sheet of paper that he was still holding after all this time. "It's his mum's and I asked for it so I could make it for dinner. I didn't mean to ask him about it then but it just . . . slipped out."

Shouta sighed. "I'm not angry," he reminded his student, putting a hand on his shoulder and leading him out of his office. "But this is not a conversation I want to repeat. You have a good head on your shoulders, Kirishima. And I don't want you picking any more fights. It

doesn't matter how well-meaning your intentions are. You're smarter than that."

Kirishima's eyes widened dramatically and his breath hitched. "You . . . you think I'm smart?"

". . . Kirishima, when have I given you the impression that I thought otherwise?"

And for the second time that day, Shouta found himself with an armful of student clinging to him. God, these damn kids. People were going to start to think he was soft.

But if he happened to stay there and hug the boy as long as he needed, that was no one's business but his.

"You know," Shouta hummed later on that night, curled up under Hizashi's arm and under the blankets in their bed, "I thought that I would be ready for Gran Torino's meeting with Midoriya tomorrow. Or, least somewhat prepared for it. But it's not even Sunday and I've already used up every last fuck I planned to use this weekend. I haven't a single one left." He sighed, burying his nose into Hizashi's chest. He was wearing one of Hizashi's oversized T-shirts along with a pair of old sleep pants. Hizashi had stolen one of Shouta's shirts, a pre-quirk band one that Shouta liked, and a pair of Shouta's sleep pants too. Like the thief he was.

Hizashi heaved a sigh and nodded, burying his face into Shouta's hair brushed out hair. He had braided it before bed to help calm both of them down from what had happened with Kirishima and Bakugou. Mostly Hizashi. It had almost been easy for Shouta. After speaking with Kirishima and sending him off to calm down in the privacy of his room, he had spent time with his students. And, with Kirishima's permission, he had taken over the duty of cooking dinner for his hell spawn. Not something he usually did but he was feeling generous.

He was *not* a dad. He was *not*.

At least the brats had liked the dinner he made them. Chicken noodle soup was something that his Mama made him, his Mum, and Dad nearly weekly when he was growing up. It was a classic, homemade recipe that her Grandmother from America had passed down to her before she had died. And then his Mama had passed it

down to Shouta. The soup along with some quickly made sandwiches made for simple, well liked dinner for his students. They had all eaten it anyway. A few of them had even asked for seconds.

In comparison to the last few hours that Hizashi had, sitting with his brats for a few hours while eating soup and carrot cake, answering questions about classwork, and teaching the girls how heroes with long hair tie it up to keep it out of their eyes was practically a cake walk.

"I," Hizashi sighed, "completely feel you there, Shouchan. I'm not going to go too deep into it but, well, it took a while for Bakugou to calm down." He rubbed the bridge of his nose. "A *long* while. He didn't want to talk to me about it but he agreed to talk to Hound Dog about it. I dropped him off at Hound Dog's office for an emergency meeting and then walked him back to the dorms afterwards. He said that he just wanted to be alone so I let him go up to his room." He sighed. "I feel a bit bad for him, Kitten. He really is trying. Or, he's trying his best to allow himself to be open to learning."

Shouta sighed. "I know, 'Zashi. And Kirishima shouldn't have picked a fight like he did. But I'm not going to say that what the kid's feeling isn't valid cause it is."

"I'm not saying that it isn't! It absolutely is! But those two are pretty close. Or, well, were." Hizashi gave a shrug, careful of not disrupting Shouta too much. "I wonder if they'll be able to work past this."

Shouta thought hard, staring at the opposite wall through half lidden eyes. There was a soft sound from the doorway and, a second later, Precious was jumping into the bed and slowly making her way up to lie on Shouta's chest. Shouta stayed quiet, letting her do what she wanted and just draping an arm over her when she got settled. "I think," he said slowly, "that until Bakugou fully realizes what he did was wrong, apologizes for it, and starts making things up to Midoriya, Kirishima won't even think about patching things up. I didn't confirm things for him but he's smart enough to add up one and one and get two. He won't tell the rest of their friends, I'm sure about that, but I think that he won't be eating lunch with Bakugou for a while."

Hizashi sighed. "Well, I noticed that Abiko was starting to reach out to him yesterday. She even managed to sneak her way into eating lunch with him and the rest of his friends yesterday."

Abiko Hina was a sweet girl, Shouta thought approvingly. Quiet and soft spoken, most of the time, until someone got her mad. And she stood firm on her decisions and opinions. Hopefully, she would be able to temper some of Bakugou's own extreme opinions. "Jackson and Bakugou seemed rather . . . tense this week, didn't they?"

"Oh, God," Hizashi sighed. "I swear, I adore Jackson but that boy and Bakugou are either going become best of friends or they're going start fighting each other whenever they can. Or both. Probably both." He rubbed a hand down his face and shook his head. "I don't want to talk about this, Kitten. I really don't."

Shouta nodded, reaching up and gently running his fingers through Hizashi's loose hair. "Alright. Want to know how Midoriya reacted to me giving him the Batman book?"

Hizashi's lips twitched up into a small smile. It was lacking its usual amusement and light but Shouta would take what he could get. "Yes, I'd like to hear how one of your *sons* reacted to getting a gift from his Dad." He laughed and jerked away sharply when Shouta jabbed his finger into his ribs. "Okay, okay! Just tell me how he reacted, dork!"

Shouta snorted but settled down immediately when Precious made a small sound of displeasure, sticking her paw over his mouth demandingly. He gently removed the paw and started to run his long fingers through her just as long fur. "He cried."

"Shocker."

Shouta rolled his eyes. "Shut up. He was emotional about seeing a book about someone like him. I can't blame him for getting choked up. This time anyway." As much as he fought against it, his tone softened. "I wonder if I can find any more Batman comics for him."

"Careful, Shouchan," Hizashi hummed, gently poking Shouta's cheek. "The rest of your kiddos might want special gifts of their own if they find out that you're giving them out. And then you'll reveal yourself as a big, old *softie.*"

"You're the softie," Shouta scoffed. He paused and looked down at Precious who had stuck her paw in his mouth again. "Do you mind," he asked slowly through the paw, not yet removing it from his mouth.

Precious stared at him with her half blind eyes and started to

purr.

Everyone in this Goddamn school was against him. His Hell spawn had corrupted his Goddamn cat. Goddammit.

Shouta sighed and carefully removed his cat's paw again, ignoring his traitorous husband snickering right beside him. "Stop that," he mumbled, gently tapping her nose. He sighed when she immediately tilted her head up and gently caught his finger in her mouth. He laid his hand on his chest and let her have it. Whatever. "I swear, 'Zashi, everyone in this school is against me."

"I know," Hizashi chuckled tiredly, pressing his cheek into the top of Shouta's head. "We're all terrible. Simply awful."

"At least you admit it."

Hizashi chuckled and curled closer into Shouta's side. "Yeah, I do. So, moving away from how awful we all are, you have high hopes for the meeting with Gran Torino tomorrow?"

Shouta scoffed so loudly that it made Precious hiss warningly at him. "Nope."

"Oh, c'mon, Kittycat. It could be fine."

"He seemed fine over the phone. Old man. Probably eightyish." Shouta wrinkled his nose. "He called me a *kid*, 'Zashi."

There was a pause before Hizashi spoke, sounding so confused. "We're *thirty one?"*

"I *know*. We aren't kids. We *teach* kids."

Hizashi shrugged. "Ah well. He's old, he can do what he wants." He sighed and stretched in a way that told Shouta that he was getting ready for sleep soon enough. "Anyway," he hummed, exhaustion clear in his voice. "It'll be fine. We both know that you'll fight anyone who hurts your kid."

Shouta wrinkled his nose, letting his eyes close and relaxed into Hizashi. "Not my kid," he mumbled sleepily.

"You're a total dad."

"Not a dad."

“Go to sleep, *dad.”*

Shouta groaned, letting himself drift off. No matter what Hizashi said, he *wasn’t* a dad.

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